

REMARKS

Applicants responded to the Office Action issued May 19, 2003, with an Amendment dated August 19, 2003, in which minor amendments were made to the independent claims, and detailed arguments were presented to rebut the obviousness rejections advanced in the Office Action. No Information Disclosure Statements have been filed since the issuance of that Office Action.

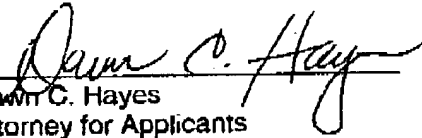
Applicants' claim amendments merely specified that the resistive trace was "made of thick film ink." The primary reference cited in the rejections set forth in the Office Action issued May 19, 2003, was Juliano, which disclosed the use of thick film inks to form a resistive layer. In the new grounds of rejection, Lin et al. also discloses the use of thick film inks to form resistive elements. Applicants therefore submit that the amendments to the claims to include the feature that the resistive trace be "made of thick film ink" did not require that the new grounds of rejection be applied.

Applicants believe that it was their arguments regarding the lack of proper motivation to combine Juliano, Manov, and Riley, and their arguments rebutting the applicability of the case law cited in support of the obviousness rejections advanced in the Office Action issued May 19, 2003, that made the prior rejection untenable. Applicants submit that the new grounds of rejection were in fact issued as a response to Applicants' arguments.

Accordingly, although Applicants made incidental, minor amendments to the claims, those claim amendments did not necessitate the new rejections based on Lin that were first asserted in the Final Office Action dated January 8, 2004. Applicants therefore request that the finality of the Office Action be withdrawn, so that Applicants may have a full opportunity to respond to the new grounds of rejection. In particular, Applicants may wish to submit evidence to establish an invention date prior to the August 9, 1999 filing date of the Lin et al. patent, thereby removing it as a reference.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached by telephone at (202) 625-3500. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address as listed below.

Respectfully submitted,


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